DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 349 033 JC 910 575

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TITLE An Analysis of the Perceptions of State and Local Policymakers of Community College Participation in Job Training Partnership Act Programs.
PUB DATE Dec 91
NOTE 154p.; Ed.D. Dissertation, Oklahoma State University.
AVAILABLE FROM University Microfilms, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106 (Order No. 92-20587).
PUB TYPE Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160) -- Dissertations/Theses - Doctoral Dissertations (041)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Administrator Attitudes; Administrators; *College Role; *Community Colleges; Community Organizations; *Educational Legislation; *Government School Relationship; *Job Training; *Labor Force Development; National Surveys; Program Attitudes; Program Budgeting; Program Implementation; Two Year Colleges; Vocational Training Centers
IDENTIFIERS *Job Training Partnership Act 1982

ABSTRACT

In 1990, a national survey of two-year institutions revealed that among colleges operating Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs, the cost per participant was far below the national average for JTPA programs. However, interviews conducted with community colleges suggested that officials responsible for disbursing JTPA funds were not especially knowledgeable about two-year institutions and favored dispersal of funds to community-based organizations (CBOs). To further examine this problem, a detailed study was conducted of policymakers' perceptions of community college participation in JTPA programs. The study included a review of the literature; an examination of JTPA state plans; and a survey of a representative sample of designated governor's liaisons for JTPA, the chairpersons of the State Job Training Coordinating Councils (SJTCCs), and chairpersons of Private Industry Councils (PICs). Among governors' liaisons, 37 of 51 surveys were returned for a 71% response rate; among SJTCC chairpersons, 34 of 51 surveys were returned for a 66% response rate; and among PIC chairpersons, 43 surveys were returned, yielding a sample greater than the statistically representative minimum of 38. Study findings included the following: (1) the JTPA legislation does not clearly explain the role of community colleges; (2) of the 38 state JTPA plans examined, 61% did not link community colleges to JTPA-funded programs; and (3) none of the three groups contacted considered CBOs better equipped to deliver JTPA services than community colleges. A review of the literature and the JTPA legislation, data tables, recommendations, the survey instrument, and a 115-item bibliography are included. (PAA)